

FACTS AND FICTION ABOUT THE BUDGET

(Mr. HERGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, in their zeal to defend the status quo, President Clinton and his Democrat allies in the Congress have inundated Americans with a barrage of misinformation about the Republican plan to balance the budget. So let me make the distinction between Clinton fiction and the plain facts.

Fiction: The Republican plan to balance the budget cuts education. Fact: Funds for student loans rise from \$24 billion to \$36 billion, and the maximum Pell grant goes up to its highest level ever.

Fiction: Our plan cuts Medicare. Fact: Medicare spending will increase by 7.2 percent, more than double the rate of inflation, each year. That is an increase from \$4,800 to \$7,100 per beneficiary. Only in Washington would a 50-percent increase be called a cut.

Mr. Speaker, when the facts are laid out, the American people support our plan to balance the budget. Let us give them the best Christmas present ever. I say to the President, support our balanced budget.

REPUBLICANS MUST COMPROMISE

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe that this House just passed a Republican-sponsored motion that allows us to go into recess for 3 days with the pending shutdown of the Government once again. I fully expected this morning, maybe naively, that I would be here to vote for a continuing resolution that would let the Government continue to operate while we worked out our differences over the budget, but that is not happening.

The President said that he was willing to go ahead with what we call a clean continuing resolution. On the Senate side they said that they would agree to it. But here in the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. GINGRICH] and the Republicans say that they will not, and I do not think it is fair. There is tremendous cost involved to this Government if we shut down again this coming Monday or any days following that, and the President has put forward a compromise budget that allows for a balanced budget over 7 years. It maintains the priorities, protects Medicare, protects Medicaid, protects the environment and education.

The Republicans have not done that. They made an agreement on the previous CR that they would try to come up with a compromise that protected Medicare and Medicaid and the other goals, and so far they have not. I think it is incumbent on them to do so.

CONFIDENCE, HOPE, AND GROWTH

(Mrs. SEASTRAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, America has been blessed with many good things. We are the richest, most productive Nation ever in the recorded history of mankind.

Today, the Congress and the President are locked in a conflict over the budget. And to paraphrase the Gipper, Ronald Reagan, it is conflict not really between two parties, but between two differing visions of the future.

One is a vision of fear and limits. The Republicans vision is one of confidence, hope, and growth.

Republicans want the best for the American family. We believe our middle-class tax cuts are profamily, progrowth, and prowork.

Liberal Democrats, on the other hand, want the best for the American Government. They love higher taxes, more rules, more regulation, and bigger bureaucracies.

Mr. Speaker, this battle over the budget is not a choice between left or right, it is a choice between up or down. I, for one, want the American people to progress and for the Government to live within its means.

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SHUT DOWN THE GOVERNMENT, SHUT DOWN CONGRESSIONAL PAYCHECKS

(Mr. DURBIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, last month the Gingrich Republicans shut down the Federal Government for the longest period of time in the history of the United States. While 800,000 Federal workers were sent home with uncertainty as to whether they would be paid, the American taxpayers picked up the bill. In fact, we paid \$700 million when the Gingrich Republicans, because of their failure to pass spending bills, shut down the Federal Government. Now they are about to set another record. They are going to shut down the Federal Government for the second time in 1 year. This time they want to do it a few days before Christmas.

Just a few minutes ago, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. GINGRICH] and his Republican friends passed a motion here so we could recess and leave for 3 days. Members of Congress can go home and shop for Christmas gifts while 350,000 Federal employees are uncertain as to whether or not they are going to be on the payroll on Monday. If Members of Congress on the Republican side believe this is a matter of principle, join me and support the bill: No budget, no pay. Shut down the Government, you shut down congressional paychecks. That will end this foolishness in a hurry.

THE NATIONAL DEBT

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, this is the national debt. I think we need to bring a little sobriety to this debate here today. \$4,988,313,115,981.39. As Members can see, Mr. Speaker, this debt is too big for the camera. This debt is too big for a convenient pocket-size chart. This debt, most importantly, is too big to pass on to our children. What it means to them is that in their lifetime they will have less income, they will pay higher interest rates, they will have a lower quality of life and less opportunities; but if we in the next week do the right thing and balance the budget, then in 7 years we can start paying down this horrendous number so our children can enjoy the great America that you and I believe in and work for. We did not get into this mess because of Democrats or Republicans. We have to get out of it because of both parties working together.

MEDICARE, MEDICAID, AND THE FEDERAL DEBT

(Mr. WARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the subject of Medicaid and Medicare and to respond to the gentleman on the issue of the Federal debt. I supported a 7-year balanced budget program but, in doing so, I did not support a \$245 billion tax break that the Republican side insists on keeping in that bill while we have this huge deficit.

Mr. Speaker, I do not doubt the sincerity of the commitment of the Speaker and the Republican caucus in taking care of the budget deficit, but I am reminded of the cartoon, the Christmas classic, "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas." It runs every year of TV and I urge Members to take a look at it again. What they say about the grinch I think is true.

In spite of my acceptance of the sincerity on the Republican side, maybe, like the grinch, their hearts are just two sizes too small, because the decision that they are making on this budget is to reduce taxes on the wealthiest while increasing, increasing taxes on the poorest.

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

(Mr. HUNTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, during the Bosnia debate a day or so ago, a number of Members came to the House floor to support provisions that they believe manifested the House's support for the troops: Do we support our